

HOLY FAITH

NEWSLETTER

October 2025

70 YEARS OF EDUCATION AT ST WOLSTAN'S

13th September 2025 was a day of celebration for many of the people of Celbridge Co Kildare. They celebrated 25 years of the life of St Wolstan's as a Community School, and 70 years of second level education for girls in the area since the original St Wolstan's was opened by the Holy Faith Sisters in 1955. That secondary school eventually evolved into the new community school, with a new trustee and management structure and serving a vastly expanded population – the old St Wolstan's in a new incarnation but with the same spirit that made the original such a special place.

As Trustees, the Le Cheile Catholic Schools Trust have inherited the Holy Faith responsibilities, and they are joined by the Archdiocese of Dublin and the Kildare Education and Training Board. The day's celebration began with Mass in the parish church, attended by past and present pupils and teachers, Holy Faith Sisters with memories of the their years in the original school, parents, Board members and representatives of the Parents' Association and Trustees bodies. In the congregation we even had Sr Anna Bolger, one of the original pupils, from 70 years ago!

The Mass was celebrated by Bishop Eamon Walsh, himself a Holy Faith past pupil, assisted by the parish priest Fr. Philip Curran. Bishop Walsh recalled how 70 years ago when he was a boy of 11, he and a friend "welcomed" the recently arrived Holy Faith Sisters by hanging two freshly caught eels on the doorknob of the newly occupied St Wolstans! He noted that, when the original St Wolstans opened, the population of Celbridge was 1,200 and there was no secondary school in the vicinity for either boys or girls. Bishop Walsh offered some special thoughts to today's student body: "be happy in your own skin", "follow the Serenity Prayer, a wonderful simple rule of thumb for life", "Discover your own gifts and potential and develop them", "Be happy at the success of others", and in difficulties "talk things out with someone you trust". Bishop Walsh also noted the qualities mentioned on the school crest – respect, honesty, kindness, commitment, student wellbeing. He thought that Margaret Aylward, who had founded the Holy Faith Congregation, would be very pleased to see how the foundations she built are being developed in St Wolstans today.

After Mass all the guests were invited out to the school, festooned with festive balloons, for chat, tours, and refreshments. There the ten Holy Faith Sisters present, representing the whole Congregation, were given a great welcome by Staff, pupils past and present, parents, Parents' Association and Board members. Sister Anna Wright, who had taught home economics in the original school, was warmly greeted by a number of her past pupils who spoke of their happy memories of her and of their time in St Wolstans. Present pupils were on hand to escort guests on a tour of the present, very impressive school layout and modern facilities and equipment. Photographs of class groups over the years were on display, as well as pictures of numerous award winners and high achievers at national level. The guests were then invited to a sit-down lunch in the staff room, now converted into a large dining area. The chat continued, with many tales of times past and lots of laughter.

What stands out from it all? The warmth of the welcome received, the spirit of genuine celebration and joy, the relaxed, happy, quiet confidence of the staff and students so obviously proud of their school as they made all welcome. A seed sown 70 years ago and lovingly nurtured over the years is bearing fruit in plenty,

Deo Gratias!

Rosemary Duffy



400 YEARS OF THE FOUNDATION OF THE VINCENTIANS

400 years
Congregation of the Mission
of Saint Vincent de Paul





On Saturday the 13th of September 2025, the Holy Faith Sisters were represented by Brenda Kennedy, Dolores Madden and me in the Basilica in Knock. The occasion was the annual Vincentian pilgrimage with special emphasis on the 400 years of Vincentian mission.

Fr. Stephen Monaghan was the main celebrant of the Mass along with his many Vincentian concelebrants. The Basilica was filled. A young adult, Rico gave a most inspiring and heartfelt talk on his understanding of mission, and how the spirit of St. Vincent de Paul has influenced his life to be of service to those in need. I will try to get a copy of Rico's talk, and if so, will make it available to our sisters and perhaps to the schools. Several students from St. Vinent's, Castleknock and St. Paul's, Raheny were present throughout the day distributing prayer cards, medals and being generally helpful to the pilgrims. The students also assisted the priests at the anointing of the sick by letting the priest know the names of those who came for anointing.

As you know most of the priests are elderly and the students assisted each priest in the distribution of Holy Communion. To see those students in action and along with Rico's talk, were real signs that the faith and Christian values are alive and active in our young people today. All three of us agreed that it was a privilege to be present in Knock and to be part of the celebration with our Vincentian connection.

Catherine Brennan



JUBILEE YEAR OF HOPE IN THE CARIBBEAN: TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

The Catholic community in Trinidad and Tobago has responded wholeheartedly to Pope Francis' declaration of 2025 as the Jubilee Year of Hope. Archbishop Gordon of Port of Spain, the capital of Trinidad, urged us to live the motto, 'pilgrims of hope'

"Let us walk together with faith, forgive past hurts, and carry the hope of Christ to every corner of Trinidad and Tobago."

Many parishes, including our own St. Theresa's Woodbrook organized pilgrimages to the designated sacred sites across the country. During these trips, the pilgrims sang, prayed, laughed and enjoyed each other's company. At least 150 pilgrims from St Theresa's set out to these sites where they were welcomed by the host parish with great hospitality and afforded the opportunity for prayer, confession, and plenary indulgences.



What transpired since then, is nothing short of a miracle! Parishioners who did not return to church since Covid 19, grasped the opportunity to leave their homes and join the pilgrimages. It was very noticeable during these outings how each one looked out for the other and as fast as one pilgrimage was completed, people were enquiring when the next one would take place.

Our parish, St. Theresa's Woodbrook has benefitted tremendously as we are trying to build the parish community. With this renewed energy, starting with the Jubilee parish group we are getting new people on board to offer their talents in the service of the community.

A highlight of the year, to date, was the Eucharistic Congress held on 10 May 2025, at the Queen's Park Oval, well known to cricket enthusiasts! Thousands gathered for a powerful day of worship, spiritual healing, and fellowship — the culmination of ten days of prayer and adoration as the monstrance and a pilgrim statue of Our Lady of Fatima journeyed throughout the country, including on a boat trip to our other island, Tobago!! The 15-inch host in the monstrance was made at the Dominican sisters' Rosary Monastery.
The event also celebrated 175 years since the establishment of the Archdiocese of Port of Spain. Together we move forward in hope.

JUBILEE YEAR OF HOPE: STORIES OF HOPE

During this Jubilee Year of Hope we, the Jubilee Committee, would like to hear some stories of hope from you. These stories could focus on individuals who are extraordinary examples of hope such as Oscar Romero, Dorothy Day and so many other "ordinary people".
It would be a great source of enrichment and hope if these stories were from your own culture and/or country. They could also take the form of a poem or an illustration. .

Our hope would be to produce the stories in booklet form to be shared with all of our Sisters. The stories can be short – not more than 1.5 A4 typed pages. If emailing them please send to Anne Warren at anne_warren@xtra.co.nz. Alternatively, if you are not into either typing or email and you live in Ireland please give or send them to a member of the Jubilee Committee – Vivienne, Marie Dunne, Bernie Murray or Roberta by the end of October.

Anne Warren

INVITATION TO MASS & LUNCH ON OCTOBER 11

If you are hoping to attend the Mass and lunch on October 11 and have not replied, please let us know as soon as you can. Thank you! The Mass will be onlne for those unable to attend.

MASS FOR DEIRDRE NELSON

On August 9 quite a good number of sisters gathered in Glasnevin to remember and pray for the happy repose of Deirdre. We were delighted to have Deirdre's nephew Peter and his wife Mary with us for the Mass. They had been in Ireland for holidays and were returning to Christchurch that night. Peter and Mary visited the cemetery and took a photo of the wall with Deirdre's name on it. They wanted to show it to Deirdre's sister- in - law Maureen, the last of her generation still alive. Maureen was particularly good to Deirdre and kept in touch with her right to the end. We all joined together for a cuppa after the Mass. May Deirdre rest in peace.

Brenda Kennedy

SISTERS' JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS





On August 15th the Jubilarians of 2025 gathered at the invitation of the CLT in the Ada Allingham Room to celebrate! The celebration began with a lovely prayer service. We remembered the other Jubilarians who were not present with us, we renewed our vows and recalled all those who have journeyed with us: our parents, family, friends and our Holy Faith Sisters. We adjourned to the large parlour where a beautiful meal had been prepared for us. It was during this delicious meal that lots of reminiscing and sharing took place. There was lots of laughter and joy that we had all reached such a milestone in our lives as Sisters of the Holy Faith.





It was a joyous celebration and hopefully there will be many more years for each of us to remember that "under God it began and through God it has grown". May we continue to follow Margaret Aylward's commitment to faith, justice and care of the poor.

We would like to thank the CLT for celebrating us and to all our sisters who sent prayers and wishes.

Pauline O'Reilly



On Sunday, August 17th, the Holy Faith Sisters of the Trinidad Area gathered in Woodbrook to celebrate Sr. Janice Tam's 60th Jubilee of Religious Profession.
The celebration began with a prayer service, highlighted by the reading from Isaiah 43:1–5:
"I have called you by name, you are mine… You are precious in my eyes and glorious, and I love you."

This scripture beautifully reflected Sr. Janice's life of dedicated service as teacher, principal, liturgical minister, extraordinary minister of the Eucharist, choir member, and more.

The Sisters expressed gratitude for the many gifts she has brought to community life — her prayerfulness, joy, laughter, and hospitality. Warm congratulations were also shared in a message from Vivienne, Central Leadership Team representative, who praised Sr. Janice's life of service and her grateful heart.
The occasion concluded with a festive meal shared in community.
To God be the glory!

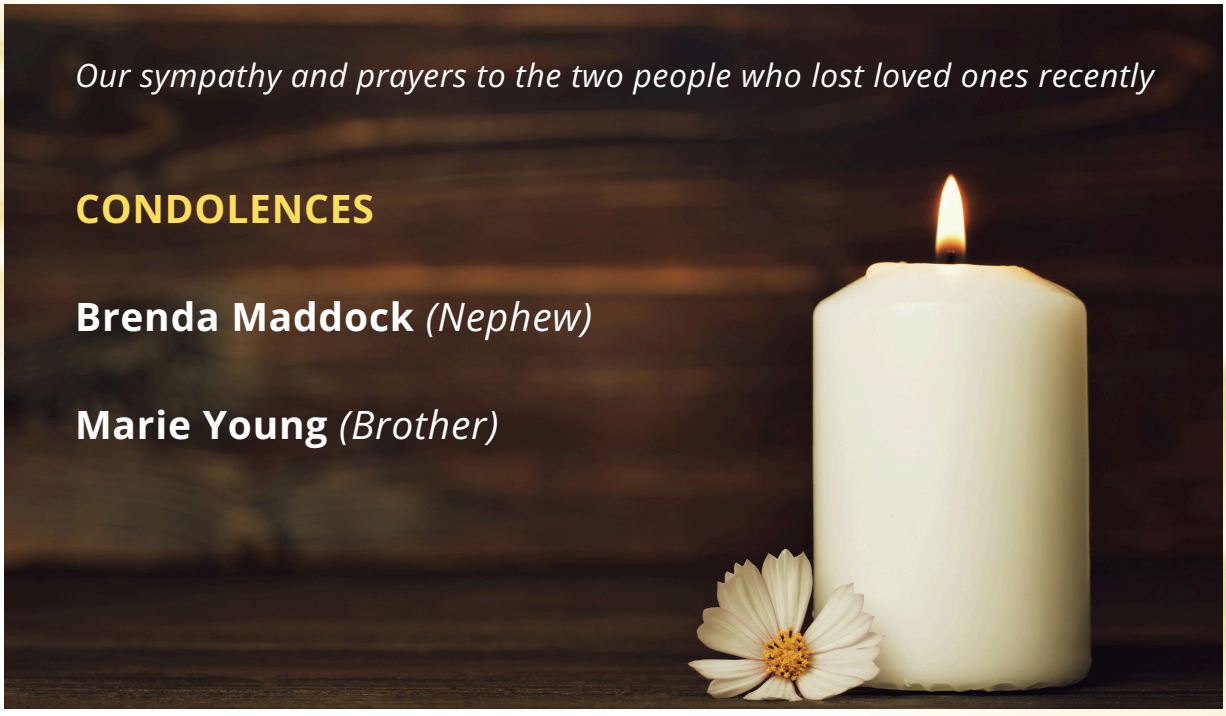
Juliet Rajah

The sisters celebrating Joan Hogans 90th birthday and platinum jubilee in Regina Residence where Joan lives.

Sisters from left to right back row: Miriam, Anne, Teresa, Gabrielle and Dolores.

Front row: Paula, Joan and carer.





SEASON OF CREATION 2025

THE SUNFLOWERS THE BIRDS PLANTED



The small birds that visit our bird feeders - outside the kitchen window in Kilcarrig Ave - knock out (or spit out!) almost as many seeds as they eat. The pigeons usually hoover up the spilt seeds, but this year some escaped and germinated without any help. The result is a lovely crop of sunflowers that arrived just in time for the start of the Season of Creation. And the bonus is we have something to admire as we are washing up!

Maureen Ferguson

BONNYBROOK PARISH CARING FOR CREATION



This year's theme is "Peace with Creation", inspired by Isaiah 32:14-18:
"My people shall abide in a peaceful habitation" (v18)

THE SYMBOL FOR SEASON OF CREATION 2025 IS THE PEACE GARDEN.

Practical activities we undertook on our parish included:



Setting up sacred space in the sanctuary of our church



Holding an outdoor service (held indoor due to inclement weather)



Setting up a rubbish graveyard



Erecting a commitment tree on which to place our commitments to creation during this time


St. Joseph the Artisan, Bonnybrook

Season of Creation September 1st – 4th October 2025

Ecological Reflection Week Inspired by Laudato Si'

A seven-day journey of reflection, gratitude, and commitment to care for our common home.

Prayer before the Reflection:

Creator God, help me to see with new eyes. Reveal to me how I walk upon this Earth, where I bring life, and where I bring harm. Let my heart be moved to compassion, and my hands to healing. Amen

Distributing a daily reflections brochure that challengeS us to take practical action to care for our creation:



Workshop on our pocket forest for parishioners and school children

Providing a live streaming from Oct 1st - 3rd of *Laudato Si'* from Rome to which we can drop into the church to catch a snippet.

LAUDATO SI'

Involving Bonnybrook Youth Group in creating a model of our parish to show its beauty when we care for creation

Harvests

‘The Apple Loft’ they call it,
And in my mind’s eye I picture
Rows of narrow bed springs
Resting on discarded crates,
And laden, laden with bright apples
Set in surried ranks,
A hair’s breath between each one
Lest canker strike and spread.

In silence, in sunlight and in moonlight
They wait, and slowly ripen.
Their sweet sharp tang hangs on the heavy air
And makes old memories of a shed at home.

I want to hold my father’s hand again
And walk with him in yet another autumn
Among our treasure trove of russet and of gold.

Today, all apples gone,
The scent of incense spirals
Then seeps into the peaceful, empty attic.
A sunlit patch of carpet draws the eye.
As does the icon, as does The Word!
Here I could rest, grow mellow,
And refined, fall into the lap of God

Cáit Mulligan - 20 July ‘88